

Ystad

Skane County · Sweden

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Ystad is a small harbor town on Sweden's south coast, in the Skåne region. Its old town holds one of the best-preserved collections of half-timbered houses in the country. Around 300 of them line narrow cobbled streets that have changed little in centuries.

The town is internationally known as the fictional home of detective Kurt Wallander. Author *Henning Mankell* set his crime novels here, and the TV and film adaptations were shot on Ystad's real streets. Ferries also leave the harbor for the Danish island of Bornholm and for Poland, so many travelers only pass through. The town itself rewards a longer stay, combining medieval streets, sandy beaches, and the farmland of the Österlen countryside just outside.

When to visit

Summers (June to August) are warm and sunny, the best time for swimming and beach walks. Spring and autumn are mild, and winter is cold with short days. Plan around the **Ystad Sweden Jazz Festival** in early August, one of Sweden's longest-running jazz festivals, with concerts at venues across town including Ystads teater.

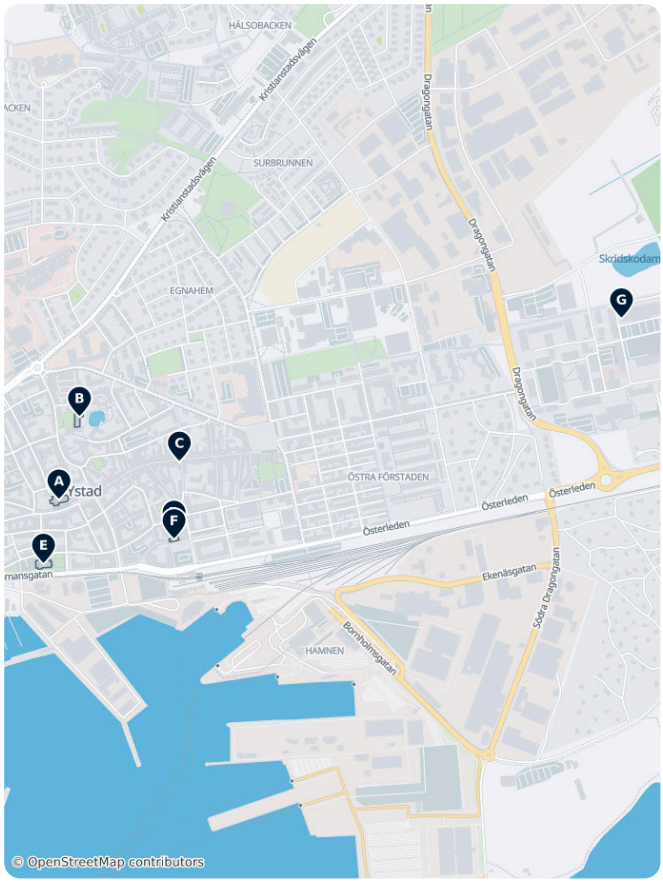
Book accommodation early for August — the festival and ferry traffic to Bornholm bring the biggest crowds of the year.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	3° / 8° Feels like -3°	-1° / -8°	12 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	3° / 9° Feels like -2°	-1° / -8°	Dry air
March	Poor Poor for sightseeing	6° / 11° Feels like 1°	0° / -6°	Dry air
April	Fair Fair for cycling	10° / 16° Feels like 6°	4° / -1°	Dry air
May	Good Good for cycling	15° / 20° Feels like 12°	8° / 4°	Dry air
June	Great Great for sightseeing	19° / 24°	12° / 9°	Dry air
July	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 26°	15° / 11°	13 rainy days
August	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 25°	15° / 11°	13 rainy days
September	Great Great for cycling	17° / 22°	12° / 8°	Dry air
October	Fair Fair for cycling	12° / 16° Feels like 8°	8° / 2°	12 rainy days · Dry air
November	Poor Poor for sightseeing	7° / 12° Feels like 3°	4° / -2°	13 rainy days · Dry air
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	4° / 9° Feels like -1°	1° / -7°	13 rainy days · Dry air

Best months: June, July, August

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights



A St. Mary's Church is Ystad's central landmark, a 13th-century brick church on the main square. Its tower keeps a centuries-old tradition: a watchman has guarded the town from up there every night since 1748.

B Greyfriars Abbey is a medieval Franciscan friary and one of the best-preserved monasteries in Sweden. It now houses the town's local history museum.

C Pilgrändshuset is believed to be the oldest half-timbered house in the Nordic countries, dating to around 1480. It stands as a reminder of how much of medieval Ystad survives today.

D Charlotte Berlins Museum preserves the home of a 19th-century piano teacher and stock investor exactly as she left it in 1881, complete with her original furniture and belongings.

E Ystads teater opened in 1894 and is one of only two theaters in Sweden that still has its original 19th-century stage machinery and painted backdrops.

F Ystads Konstmuseum is housed in a 1936 building and focuses on art from southern Sweden and Denmark.

For fans of the Wallander books and TV series, G Ystad Studios Visitor Center lets you walk through real film sets used in the crime dramas shot around town.

Ystad – Plan Your Trip

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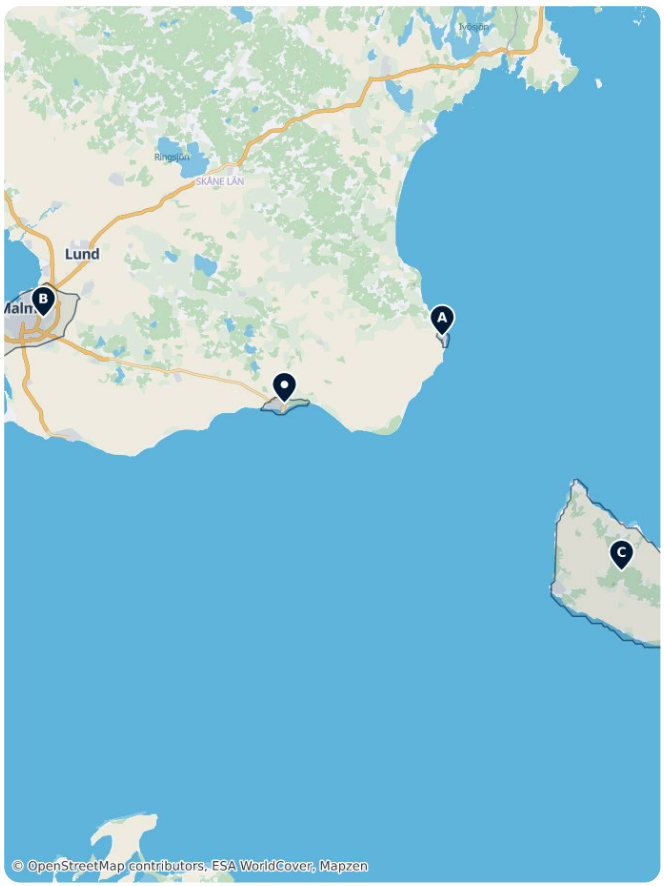
What to experience

Ystad's Wallander fame and coastal setting give it a few activities beyond simple sightseeing.

- Follow the self-guided Wallander Trail through locations from Henning Mankell's crime novels and their TV adaptations.
- Listen for the tower watchman's horn call from St. Mary's Church after dark, a tradition kept up since 1748.
- Swim or sunbathe at Strand, backed by pine forest, on a warm summer day.
- Cycle or walk a stretch of the Sydkustleden coastal trail toward the dunes at Sandhammaren.

Day trips

Ystad sits at the heart of Österlen, Skåne's scenic southeastern corner, so there is plenty to see within a short drive.



- **Kåseberga** — about 20 minutes by car or local bus. A small fishing village with smokehouses, next to Ale's Stones, an Iron Age stone monument laid out in the shape of a ship.
- **Kivik** — about 45 minutes by car. Known for its Bronze Age burial mound and its apple orchards, especially lively during the autumn harvest.
- A Simrishamn — about 45 minutes by car or bus. A historic fishing town on the Österlen coast with a working harbor and small art galleries.
- B Malmö — about 45 minutes by train. Sweden's third-largest city, with the striking Turning Torso tower and a short hop from Copenhagen over the Öresund bridge.
- C Bornholm — about 1.5 hours by ferry from Ystad's harbor. A Danish island known for round medieval churches and dramatic cliffs, an easy day trip by the fast ferry.

Getting there

- **By air**: The nearest airport is Malmö Airport (MMX), about 38 km northwest, with limited routes. Most international travelers arrive via Copenhagen Airport (CPH) in Denmark and continue by train and bus, a trip of around 2–2.5 hours total.
- **By train**: Ystad's train station has direct connections to Malmö (about 45 minutes), where you can change for the rest of Sweden and, via the Öresund bridge, Copenhagen.
- **By bus**: Regional Skånetrafiken buses connect Ystad with Malmö, Kristianstad, and towns across Österlen. Skånetrafiken
- **By ferry**: Ystad is a major ferry port, with passenger and car ferries sailing from the harbor at Terminal Fyrkajen. Routes run to Rønne on Bornholm (about 1.5 hours) and overnight to Świnoujście in Poland (about 7 hours).

Getting around

- **Public transit**: The old town is compact enough to walk, but Skånetrafiken buses connect the center with the harbor, train station, and beaches. Buy tickets through the Skånetrafiken app; drivers do not sell tickets on board.
- **Taxi**: Taxis wait at the train station and can be booked by phone. Ride-hailing apps have limited coverage in a town this size.
- **On foot / cycling**: The old town is flat and easy to explore on foot. Skåne is one of Sweden's most cycling-friendly regions, and Ystad connects to signed coastal and countryside cycling routes.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The old town is compact and flat, easy to cover entirely on foot in a day.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

High

Skåne is flat and one of Sweden's most cycling-friendly regions, with signed routes from Ystad into the countryside and along the coast.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Not for the town center — it is small and walkable. A car helps for day trips to Kåseberga, Kivik, and the Österlen countryside, where bus service is limited.
- **Parking**: Pay-and-display parking surrounds the old town center; pay by app or at machines. Free parking is available a short walk out, near the harbor and train station.
- **Restrictions**: None beyond a few pedestrian-only lanes in parts of the old town.

Food & drink

Skåne's farmland shows up on Ystad's menus. Look for potato dumplings (*kroppkakor*), smoked fish straight from the harbor, and apple desserts made with fruit from the Kivik orchards nearby.

For a meal out, head to the lanes around Stortorget and Stora Östergatan, where cafés and restaurants cluster in restored half-timbered buildings.

What to eat & drink

LUNCH

Open Sandwich · Smörgås
Single-slice bread topped with a range of ingredients — cheese, egg, shrimp, or cured meat — a common Swedish lunch.

Daily Lunch Special · Dagens lunch
A set weekday lunch including a hot main dish, salad bar, bread, and coffee for around 120–160 SEK — the best value hot meal.

DINNER

Meatballs · Köttbullar
Small pork-and-beef meatballs served with cream sauce, mashed potato, and lingonberry jam — Sweden's most iconic dish.

Cured Salmon · Gravlax
Salmon cured with salt, sugar, and dill, sliced thin and served with mustard sauce on rye bread or as a starter.

Pickled Herring · Sill
Marinated herring in preparations ranging from mustard to matjes, a staple of Swedish festive tables and smörgåsbord.

Potato Gratin with Sprats · Janssons frestelse
A baked gratin of potato, onion, cream, and pickled sprats — a classic Swedish comfort dish, especially at Christmas.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Cinnamon Bun · Kanelbulle
Soft, spiced bun flavoured with cinnamon and cardamom, the centrepiece of Swedish fika culture.

DRINKS

Aquavit · Akvavit
Scandinavian spirit distilled from grain or potato and flavoured with caraway or dill, traditionally drunk at celebrations.

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Safety & health

Ystad is a safe, low-crime town, and violent crime against tourists is rare. Keep an eye on bags and wallets during the Jazz Festival and other summer crowds, when petty theft is most common.

History

Ystad has been a trading port since the Middle Ages, with roots going back to the 13th century. Danish rule lasted until 1658, when the Treaty of Roskilde transferred Skåne to Sweden — a shift still visible in the town's street names and architecture.

Friars founded Greyfriars Abbey in the 13th century, and the abbey became one of medieval Scania's most important religious centers before the Reformation closed it in the 1530s. St. Mary's Church, built around the same period, still anchors the main square.

Because Ystad never grew into an industrial city, its medieval street plan and roughly 300 half-timbered houses survived largely intact — the same streets that now double as film sets for the Wallander crime dramas.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Sweden at a glance:

CURRENCY
SEK kr

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



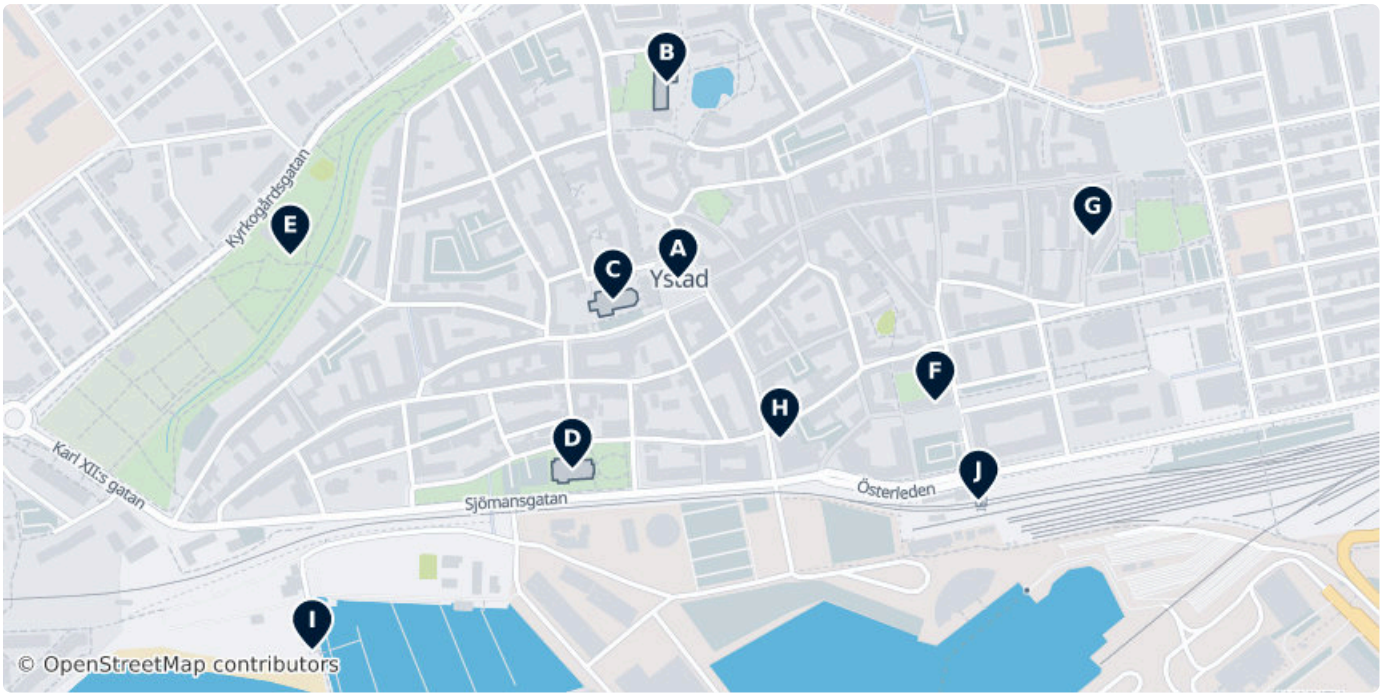
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Swedish

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Ystads distrikt Unmissables

Explore Ystad's history through the 13th-century Greyfriars Abbey and the brick-built Sankta Maria kyrka. This coastal town features a preserved 19th-century theater and the iconic filming locations of the Wallander crime series. The district's artistic side is represented by local photography and contemporary art galleries, while the harbor area offers seaside dining at the marina. Visitors can access the town center via the central train station, located near the main park and the tourist information center.





A Wallander Trail

Ystad is the base of the famous Swedish series Wallander. Follow the route to encounter places you know from TV.

7 Stortorget, Ystad 27143, Sweden (55.42952, 13.82010)



B Greyfriars Abbey

The Greyfriars Abbey, sometimes also simply Abbey in Ystad, is a medieval former friary in Ystad, Sweden.

6 Hospitalsgatan, Ystad 27134, Sweden (55.43139, 13.81991)

Mo–Fr	12:00–17:00
Sa–Su	12:00–16:00



C St. Mary's Church

Ystad's oldest building, this 13th-century brick church features a Baroque altar and maintains the nightly tradition of the Tower Watchman blowing his horn.

1 Stortorget, Ystad 27143, Sweden (55.42932, 13.81901)

svenskakyrkan.se/ystad, +4641169200

D Ystads Teater

Neo-Renaissance theater built in 1894, notable for its well-preserved 19th-century stage machinery and original interior decor.

Skansgatan, 271 43 Ystad, Sweden (55.42771, 13.81832)

ystadsteater.se

E Norra Promenaden

Landscaped public park located north of the historic town center.

(55.42974, 13.81358)

F Ystads Turistbyrå

Official visitor center providing maps, brochures, and local information for the Ystad and Österlen region.

(55.42835, 13.82443)

G Fotogalleri Stefan Idemark

Art gallery specializing in contemporary photography.

(55.42992, 13.82708)

H Gallery M1

Local art gallery showcasing contemporary works and rotating exhibitions.

(55.42800, 13.82181)

I Ystad Marinan

Waterfront restaurant located at the Ystad marina, offering views of the harbor and the Baltic Sea.

Sweden (55.42598, 13.81394)

ystadmarinan.se

J Ystad

Central railway station serving regional Pågatågen and Öresundståg trains, connecting Ystad to Malmö and Copenhagen.

(55.42740, 13.82516)

DATA SOURCES

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- St. Mary's Church — "Ystad, St. Maria Kyrka 2" by Allie_Caulfield from Germany, cc-by-2.0

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